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COMES PETER?

VERNA HILLS
Eleonora Madsen





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HERE COMES PETER

Text by
Pictures by

VERNA HILLS ^B
Eleonora Madsen



BOSTON

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD COMPANY

1935

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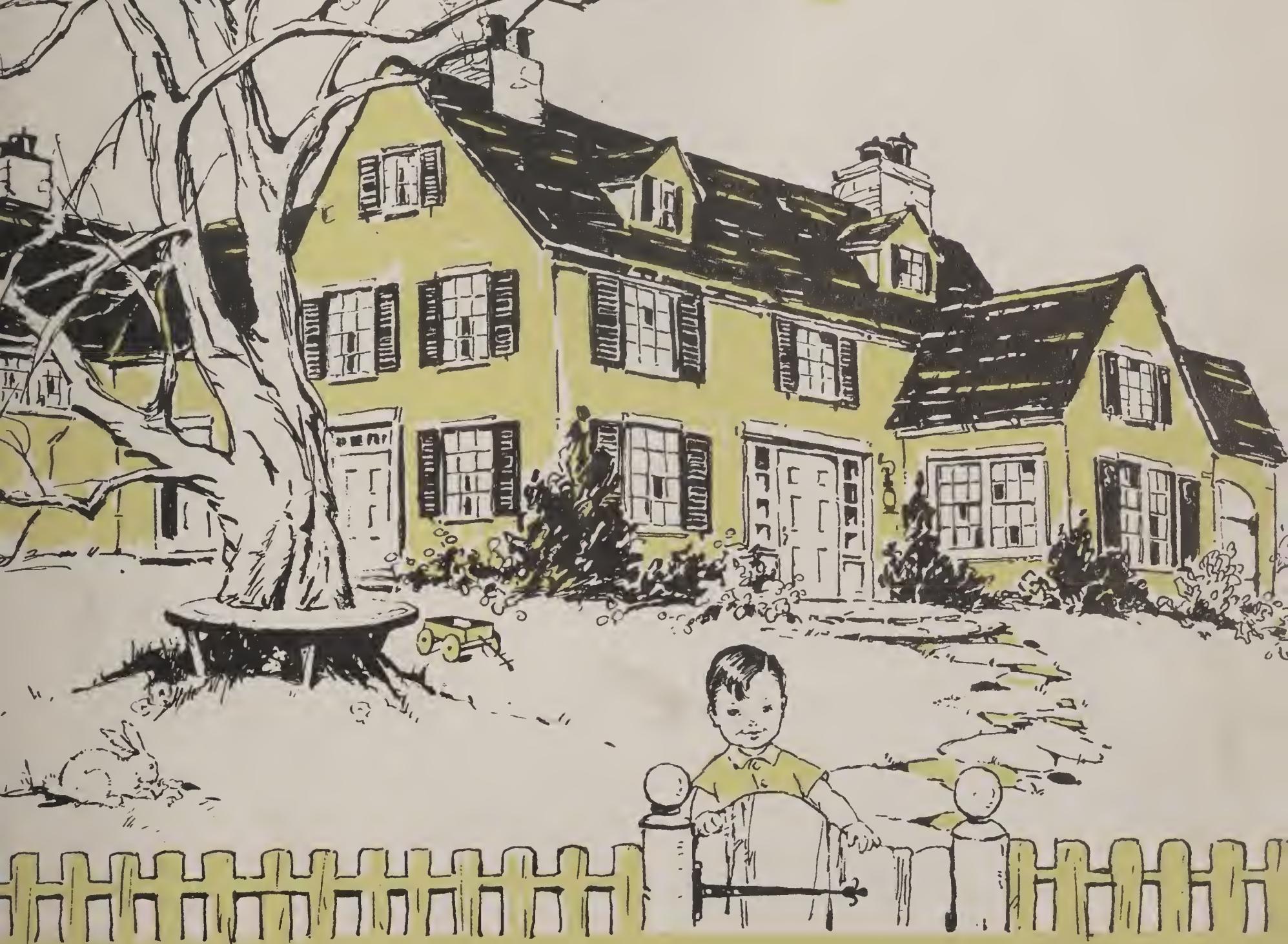
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HERE COMES PETER

1. PETER'S FAMILY

Once there was a little boy named Peter. He lived in a big yellow house.



Peter had a tall father with dark hair, and a tall mother with light hair, and a baby sister with almost no hair at all. They lived in the big yellow house with Peter.

He had a nurse called Nanny. She took care of him



and of the little baby sister. He had Bessie. She cooked his breakfast and dinner and supper, and Mummy's and Daddy's breakfast and dinner and supper. Nanny and Bessie lived in the big yellow house, too.

He had a little yellow bird, and a black-and-white dog, and a brown bunny.



The little yellow bird's name was Dicky. He lived in a cage in the dining room window.

The black-and-white dog's name was Terry. *He* lived in a kennel beside the garage.

The brown bunny's name was Hoppy. And *he* lived in a little house under the tree in the back yard.

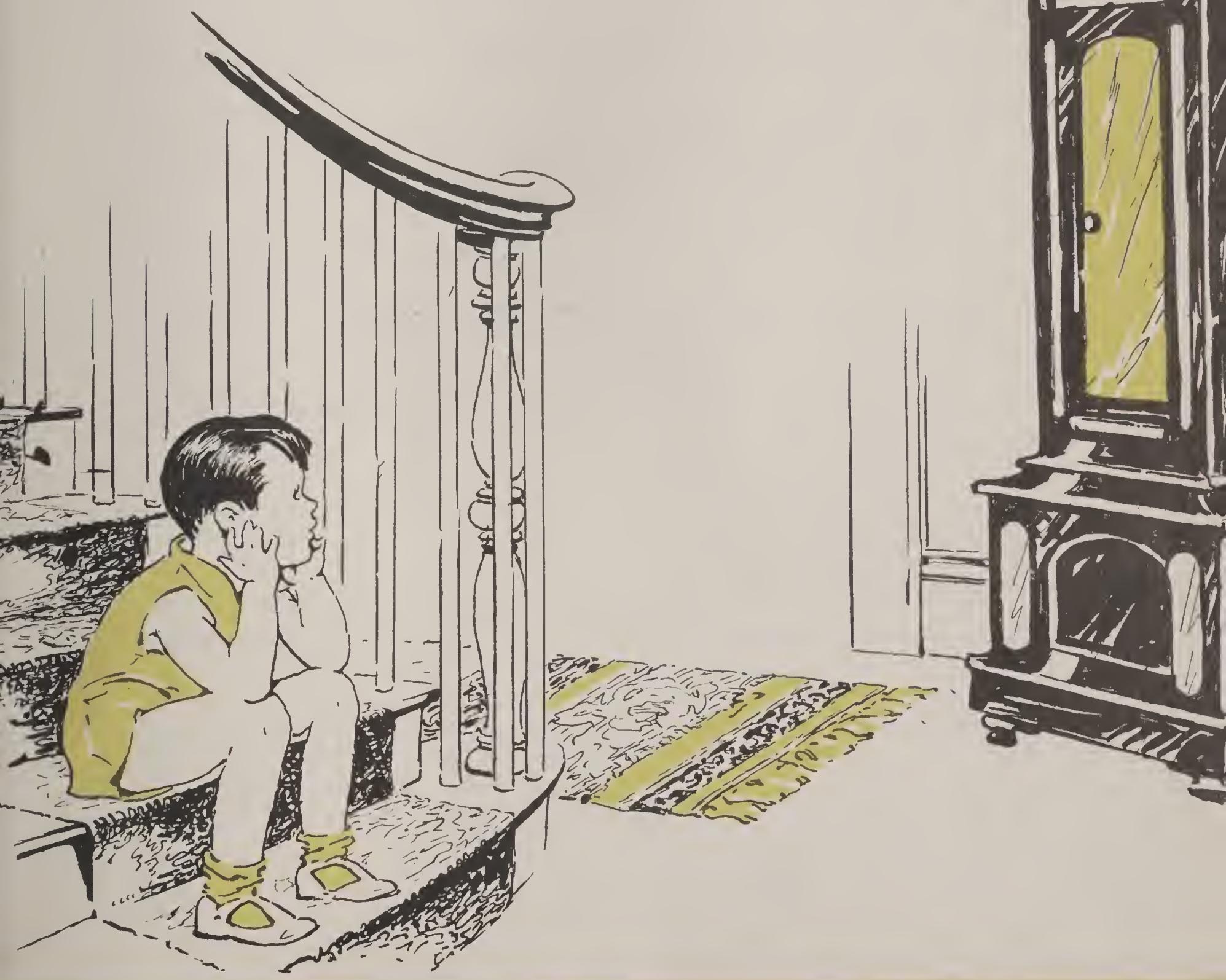
Peter loved his family very much. Daddy and Mummy and Baby and Nanny and Bessie, and Dicky and Terry and Hoppy, were his family. He loved them all.



2. THE CLOCK IN THE HALL

In the hall of Peter's big yellow house there was a tall clock. It had a deep voice that told the hour with a boom-boom-boom.

Peter thought that the clock was trying to talk to him. He liked to sit on the stairs and listen to its tick-tock, tick-tock.



At last he thought he knew what it said in its booming voice. When he first awoke in the morning, the clock was striking seven. Peter was sure that it said, "Time for boys to jump from bed."

He *did* jump from bed. Soon he forgot all about the clock. There were many things to be done out of doors.

Before he could do half of them, Nanny would be calling him in to dinner.

The tall clock would be saying:

"Wash your hands, wash your face,
Comb your hair, take your place!"

When the old clock spoke next, it said just, "Come!" That was one o'clock, nap-time.

Nanny told him that an hour later it said, "Sleep tight!" But Peter did not hear it.

He woke up in time to hear it say, "Hop up, Peter!" That was three o'clock, playtime.

He did not often hear it again until play was over. Then the tall clock boomed six, "Peter, Peter, come to your supper!"

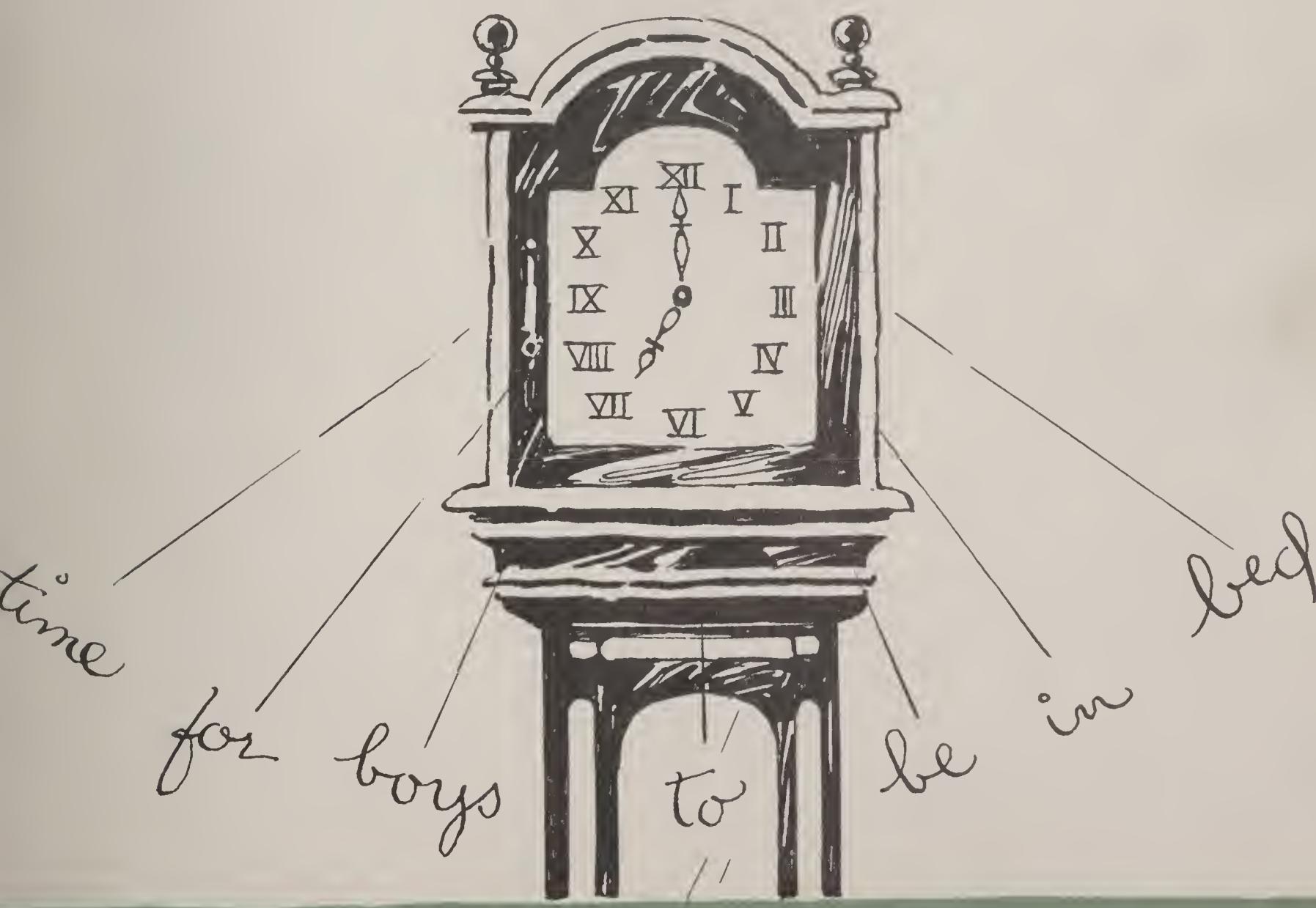
When the clock struck again, Peter was not always

glad to hear it. At night seven o'clock meant, "Time for boys to be in bed." The day's fun was over.

To-morrow the tall clock would say the very same things to him.

Peter thought he liked best to hear it at noontime, when it talked the longest. Then dinner was ready to put on the table. Then the old clock was saying to a hungry boy:

"Wash your hands, wash your face,
Comb your hair, take your place!"



3. JACK-O'-LANTERNS

One day it was getting dark. Peter looked out of the living room window.

He saw something very strange coming across the lawn. It had a round head, with two big eyes and a nose and a mouth. The eyes and the nose and the mouth all looked as if they were made of fire.

Peter was not afraid. He knew that the strange thing was a jack-o'-lantern.

He ran to call Mummy. Peter wanted her to see it, too.

When he came back, he heard a rap-rap-rap and a tap-tap-tap on the *dining room* window. Peter ran in to see what it was. There, looking in at the window, were *two* jack-o'-lanterns.

After a little while Peter heard a noise in the living room, boo-oo-oo, boo-oo-oo. He turned around to see what it was.

There, looking in at the window, were *three* jack-o'-lanterns. They all had big eyes and noses and mouths. And the eyes and noses and mouths all looked as if they were made of fire.

When Peter's supper was ready, he went up to the nursery. There, sitting on the shelf, was a big jack-o'-lantern. It had shining eyes, and a shining nose, and a shining mouth.

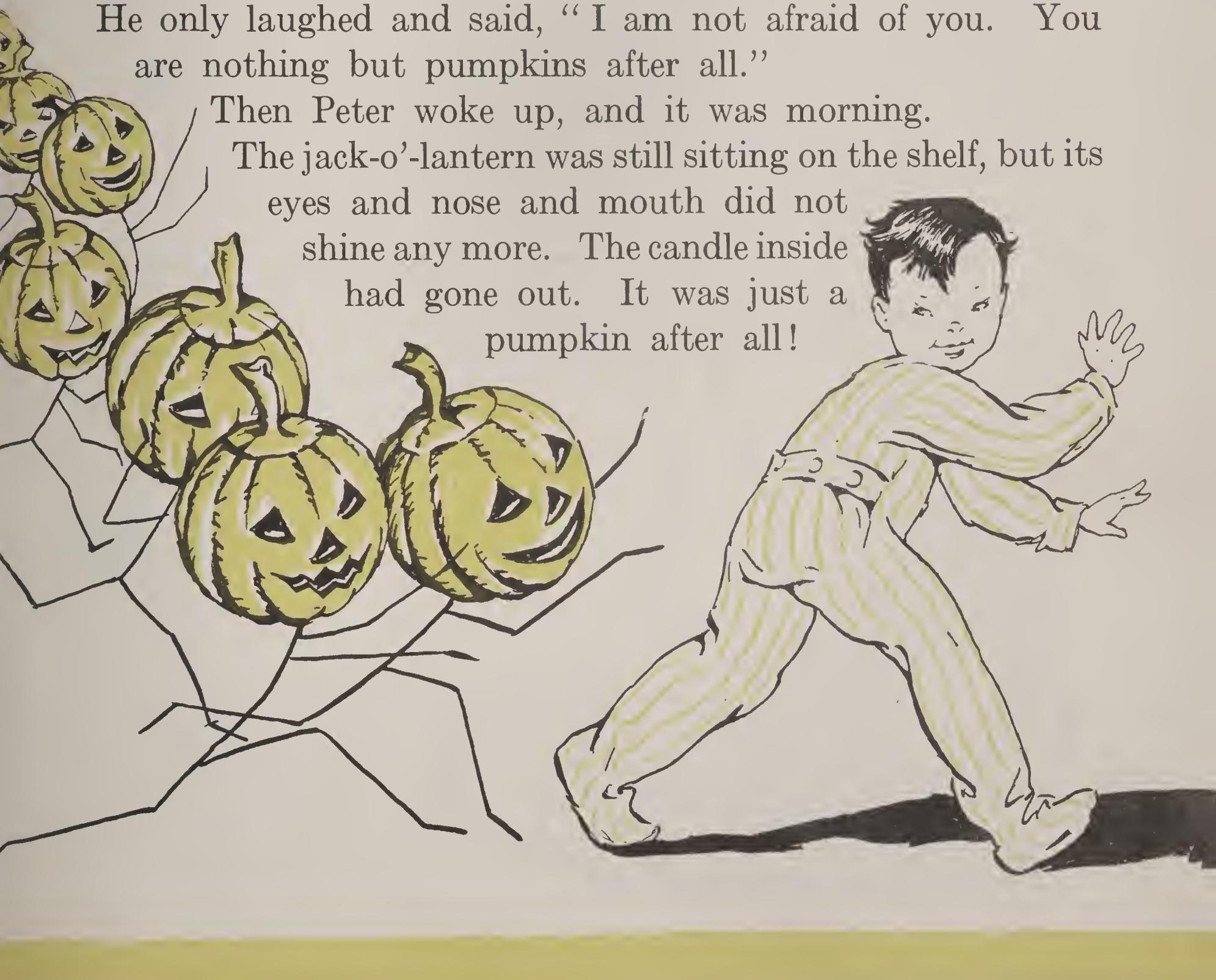
It was still there when bedtime came.

Peter went to sleep in his little white bed. By and by he began to dream that the jack-o'-lanterns were chasing him. They ran and they ran, but Peter was not afraid.

He only laughed and said, "I am not afraid of you. You are nothing but pumpkins after all."

Then Peter woke up, and it was morning.

The jack-o'-lantern was still sitting on the shelf, but its eyes and nose and mouth did not shine any more. The candle inside had gone out. It was just a pumpkin after all!



4. THE WHITE KITTEN

One day Peter's father brought him a little white kitten. She wore a bell on a ribbon around her neck.

When she walked, the bell said, "Ting—a—ling—a—ling—a—ling." When she ran, it said, "Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling."

One day Peter came into the house. He called, "Kitty, kitty, kitty!"

But the white kitten did not come.

Very faintly he could hear, "Ting—a—ling—a—ling—a—ling, miaow, miaow."

Peter went upstairs. He looked into Mummy's room. But the white kitten was not there.

He could hear a little louder now, "Ting—a—ling—a—ling—a—ling, miaow, miaow."

He looked into the nursery. The white kitten was not there.

A little louder still he could hear, "Ting—a—ling—a—ling—a—ling, miaow, miaow."

Peter looked into Nanny's room. The white kitten



was not there, but still louder he could hear, "Ting—a—ling—a—ling, miaow, miaow."

Peter looked into the bathroom. The white kitten was not there.

Quite loudly now he could hear, "Ting—a—ling—a—ling—a—ling, miaow, miaow."

Peter opened the door of the linen closet.

"Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling!" The white kitten ran out and rubbed against Peter's legs.

"Miaow, miaow," said the white kitten, as if she were very glad to see him.



5. IN THE WOODS

On a bright sunshiny day in November, Peter went with his Daddy for a walk.

Daddy walked with long, slow steps, like this.

Peter walked with short, quick steps, like this.

They walked and they walked, with their long, slow steps and their short, quick steps, until they came to the woods.

Then they walked with their long, slow steps and their short, quick steps, until they came to the middle of the woods. Their feet made a crackling sound.

Peter looked in front. He could see nothing but trees.

He looked in back, and he could see nothing but trees.

He looked at this side, and he looked at that side, and he could see nothing but trees.

He looked up, and there he saw the branches of the trees. They were bare, and the sun was shining through them.

He looked down. Under his feet were the leaves which had fallen from the trees.

They were lying all about on the ground. There were red leaves, and yellow leaves, and brown leaves.



They made the scuffling sound when Daddy and Peter walked with their long, slow steps and their short, quick steps through the woods.

Suddenly Peter saw a tree which was still green. He said to his Daddy, "What kind of tree is that?"

"It is a pine tree," said Daddy. "Pine trees stay green all winter. So do some other trees. They are hemlock trees, and fir trees, and spruce trees. We call these trees evergreens. Perhaps one of them will come to you at Christmas, and be your Christmas tree."

So Peter and his Daddy walked back with their short, quick steps, and their long, slow steps.

They walked through the red leaves, the yellow leaves, and the brown leaves, and made a crackling sound with their feet.

They walked along to the edge of the woods.

Peter looked in front, and far away he saw the houses of the town where he lived.

He looked up, and there was the blue sky.

He looked to this side and to that side, and there were fields.

He looked back, and there were the trees.

"Daddy," said Peter, "may we go to the woods again some day?"



6. THANKSGIVING TIME

One day Peter's Mummy said to him, "Peter, you are going to Grandmother's for Thanksgiving."

"Are you going, too?" asked Peter.

"Yes," said Mummy, "I am going."

"Is Daddy going?" asked Peter.

"Yes," said Mummy again, "Daddy is going, and Baby and Nanny."

"And Dicky and Hoppy and Terry?" asked Peter.

"I am afraid not," said Mummy. "There won't be room for them all in the car."

Peter was troubled. "But who will give Dicky his bath and his breakfast of seeds? Who will feed Terry, and play with him? Who will take Hoppy his carrots and oatmeal?"

"Do you think Jimmy would do it?" asked Mummy. "Jimmy is a nice boy, and he lives just next door."

"Is Bessie going away, too?" asked Peter.

"Yes," said Mummy, "Bessie is going to see her mother. She will take Dicky with her, because the house will be cold. But Terry and Hoppy can stay in their own little houses, if Jimmy will feed them. Do you think he would?"

Peter ran over to see Jimmy.

"Are you going away for Thanksgiving?" asked Peter.

"No," said Jimmy, "we are going to have company. All my uncles and aunts and cousins are coming."

So Peter asked Jimmy if he would take care of Terry and Hoppy. Jimmy said he would.

Suddenly Peter remembered something. He ran to Mummy.

"We forgot the white kitten!" he cried. "What will the white kitten do?"

"If you would like it," said Mummy, "I think the white kitten could go with us."

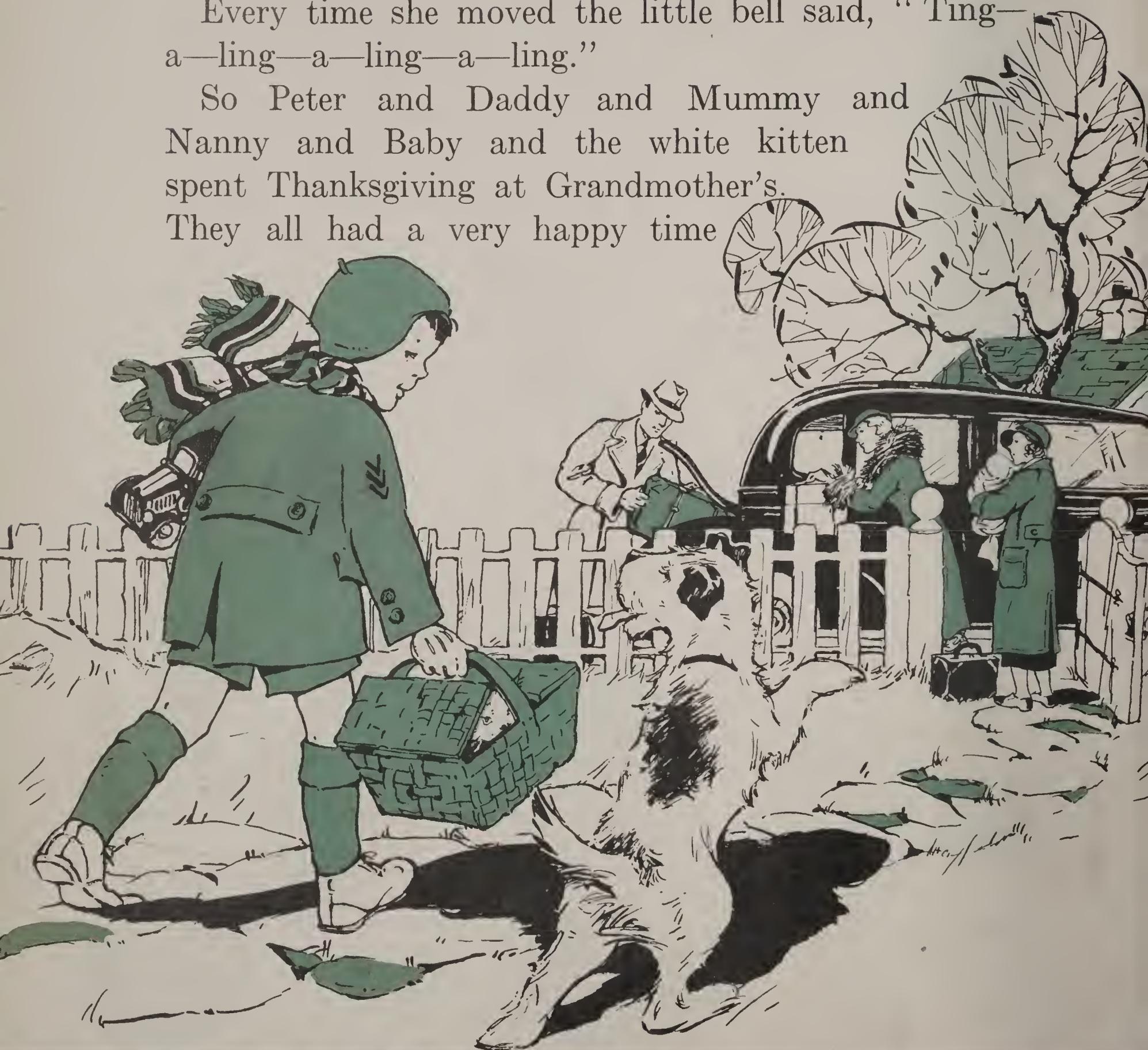


So Bessie took Dicky, and Jimmy cared for Hoppy and Terry.

The white kitten went in a square green basket.

Every time she moved the little bell said, "Ting—a-ling—a-ling—a-ling."

So Peter and Daddy and Mummy and Nanny and Baby and the white kitten spent Thanksgiving at Grandmother's. They all had a very happy time



7. PETER AND THE WIND

When Peter awoke one morning, he heard a sound like this, "Whoo-oo-oo." It sounded as if it were in the chimney.

"Who's whistling in my chimney?" asked Peter.

"Whoo-oo-oo, whoo-oo-oo?" said the wind.

Peter climbed out of bed and ran to look out of the window. He saw the trees swaying, swaying back and forth.

"Who's bending the trees?" cried Peter.



“ Whoo-oo-oo, whoo-oo-oo? ” said the wind.

After breakfast Peter put on his hat and coat and went to the door. He saw a piece of paper going all by itself up the sidewalk.

“ Who’s pushing that paper? ” asked Peter.

“ Whoo-oo-oo, whoo-oo-oo? ” answered the wind.

Then Peter stepped out.

Just as he went around the corner, his hat came off. It went rolling over and over across the yard.

Peter ran after it. On and on went the hat.

“ Who’s stealing my hat? ” cried Peter.

“ Whoo-oo-oo, whoo-oo-oo? ” said the wind.

Peter’s hat rolled against the fence, and Peter picked it up. He put it on very tight.

“ I know, ” he said. “ I know who is doing all these things. It’s you, Mr. Wind. ”

But the wind kept right on saying, “ Whoo-oo-oo, whoo-oo-oo? ” all the rest of the day.



8. TIPTOE

It was very dark out of doors. Supper was all over.

The clock struck seven. Peter knew what that meant, "Time for boys to be in bed."

He was all ready. He jumped in and lay still. To-night was a special night.

Nanny tucked him in. She turned the light low and went out.

Mummy came in to kiss him. Peter gave her an extra squeeze. This was a special night!

Then Daddy came in. Peter gave *him* an extra squeeze, too. It was the most special night of the year!

Daddy turned the light quite out and went away, shutting the door tight.

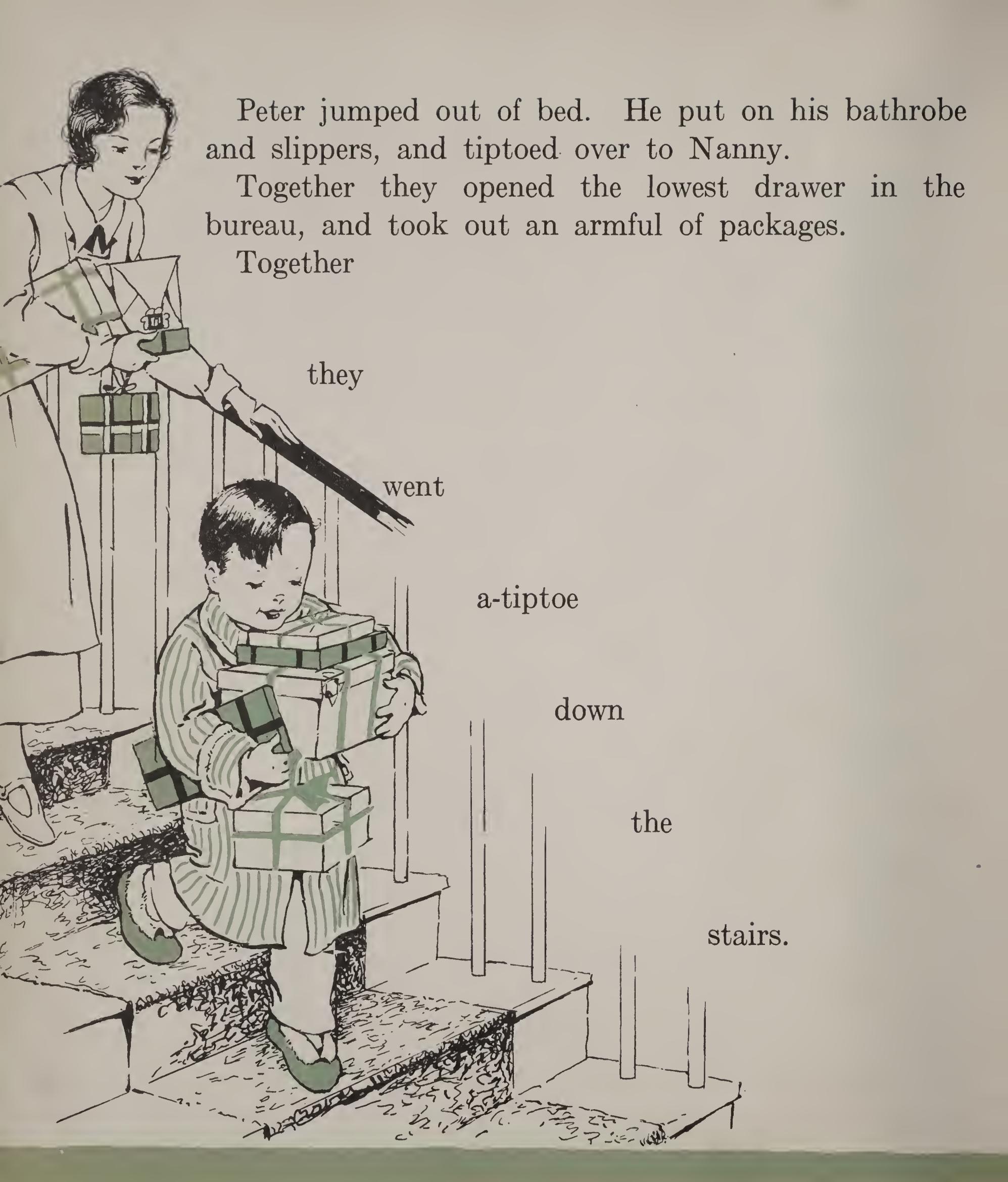
Peter listened. He thought he heard Mummy go a-*tiptoe* down the hall.

Then he knew that he heard Daddy go a-*tiptoe* down the hall. Daddy's *tiptoe* was not so soft as Mummy's.

After a long time he heard the front door close.

After another long time his own door opened, and there was Nanny. She was turning on the light.

"Are you ready, Peter?" asked Nanny.



Peter jumped out of bed. He put on his bathrobe and slippers, and tiptoed over to Nanny.

Together they opened the lowest drawer in the bureau, and took out an armful of packages.

Together

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down

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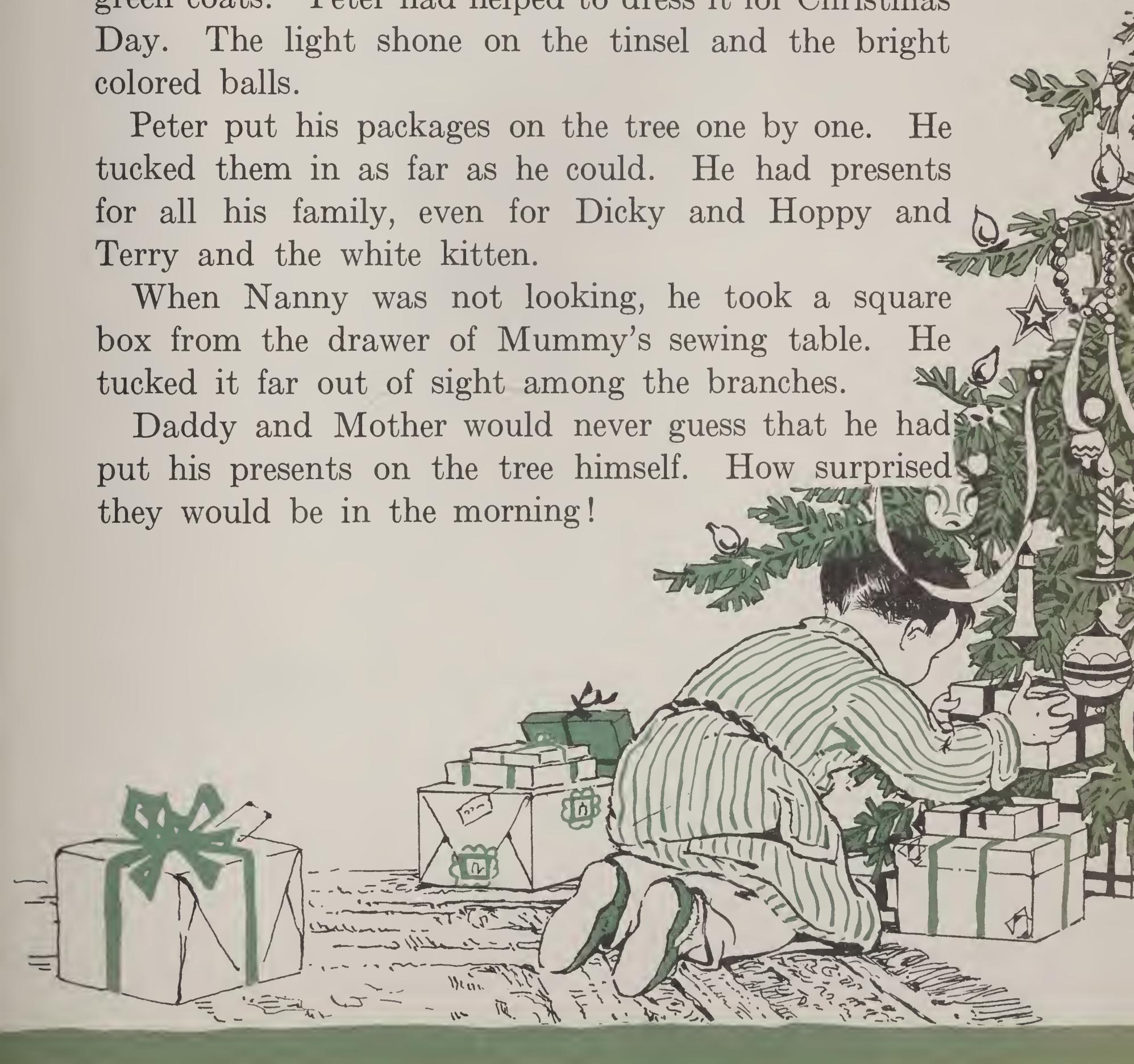
stairs.

In the living room stood a tall tree. It was like the ones Peter had seen in the woods, still wearing their green coats. Peter had helped to dress it for Christmas Day. The light shone on the tinsel and the bright colored balls.

Peter put his packages on the tree one by one. He tucked them in as far as he could. He had presents for all his family, even for Dicky and Hoppy and Terry and the white kitten.

When Nanny was not looking, he took a square box from the drawer of Mummy's sewing table. He tucked it far out of sight among the branches.

Daddy and Mother would never guess that he had put his presents on the tree himself. How surprised they would be in the morning!



When they had finished, Nanny turned out the light in the living room.

Peter went on tiptoe up the stairs. He tiptoed across the room and crawled into bed.

Nanny came tiptoeing in behind him. She tucked him in again and left him alone in the dark.

He was very happy.

After a little while he heard voices singing in the cold winter night:

“ Away in a manger,
No crib for his bed.”

Peter smiled and went to sleep. To-morrow would be a special day, too!



9. CHRISTMAS DAY

“ This is Christmas Day,” said Peter.

No one heard him. Every one else was asleep.

“ This is Christmas Day,” said Peter again. He liked the sound of the words. They made him glad.

He thought of how pleased all his family would be with the presents he had put on the tree for them.

At last the tall clock spoke in its booming voice:

“ One two three four five six seven.”

“ Time for boys to jump from bed.”

The special day had begun.

Soon all Peter’s family were up.

Daddy and Mummy and Nanny and Bessie said, “ Merry Christmas! ” to Peter and to each other.

Peter said, “ Merry Christmas! ” to them, and to Baby and Dicky and Hoppy and Terry and the white kitten.



Then he ran to take down his stocking from the fireplace. It was all humpy with things inside.

"Breakfast is ready," said Bessie.

Peter was glad again. After breakfast they would have the Christmas tree.

All the family came into the living room. Mummy had said that they might, even Hoppy in his own little house.

Daddy pulled down the shades to make it dark, so that the red and green lights on the tree would show.



Terry ran around the tree and barked.
Hoppy tried to hide in the corner of
his pen.

Dicky tucked his head under
his wing and went to sleep.

The white kitten played
with the corner of the rug.

The pets did not know that
it was Christmas Day.

Daddy began to take the
gifts from the tree.

There was something for
Mummy, and something for
Peter and for Baby.

There were gifts for
Daddy and Nanny
and Bessie.

“This present is
for Hoppy,” said
Daddy.



Peter ran to take it. He took off the paper. Inside was a head of lettuce. Peter put it into Hoppy's pen.

Hoppy came out and began to munch the lettuce. His nose went wiggle, wiggle. He forgot to be afraid.

"Here is something for Terry," said Daddy.

Peter ran to take that, too. He lifted the cover from the box. Inside was a rubber ball. Peter rolled it along the floor. Terry ran after the ball. He took it in his mouth and shook it.

Daddy found more gifts for Mummy and Baby.

He found more for Peter and Nanny and Bessie.

He found some for himself.



"Now, here is a present for Dicky," said Daddy.

Peter opened it. Inside there was a new swing for Dicky's cage. Peter opened the door of the cage and put in the swing.

Dicky hopped down on to it. He cocked his



head first on one side and then on the other. He began to sing.

"Well, well," said Daddy, "the white kitten was not forgotten. Here is something for her."

"I'll take it," said Peter. He untied the box. Inside there was a catnip mouse. Peter put it down in front of the white kitten.

The white kitten smelled of it and licked it. She ran round and round very fast. Her little bell said, "Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling, ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling."

"Now every one has had something," said Peter.

He sat down on the floor and began to play with his new toys.

Bessie went out to the kitchen to start the dinner.

Baby crawled around and looked at everything.

Hoppy ate his lettuce.

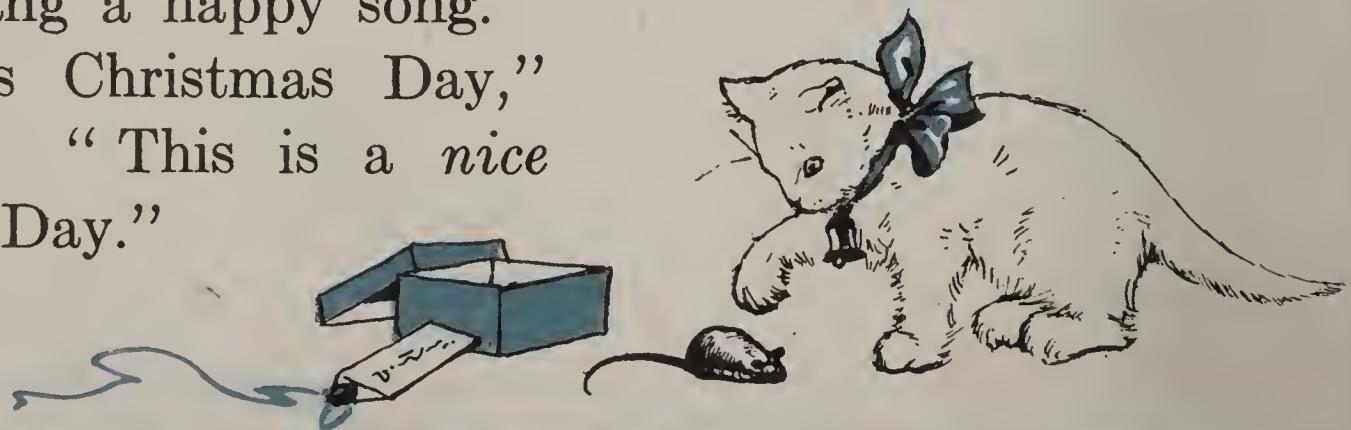
Terry lay down with his ball close beside him and went to sleep.

The white kitten played with the ribbon and bright colored papers.

Daddy and Mother and Nanny sat watching.

Dicky sang a happy song.

"This is Christmas Day," said Peter. "This is a nice Christmas Day."



10. ALL ABOARD!

Peter was buttoning his new coat. He had on his best suit and his shiniest shoes.

“Too-too! Too-too!” called Mother. “All aboard for the station!”

Peter picked up his new hat and ran to the top of the stairs.

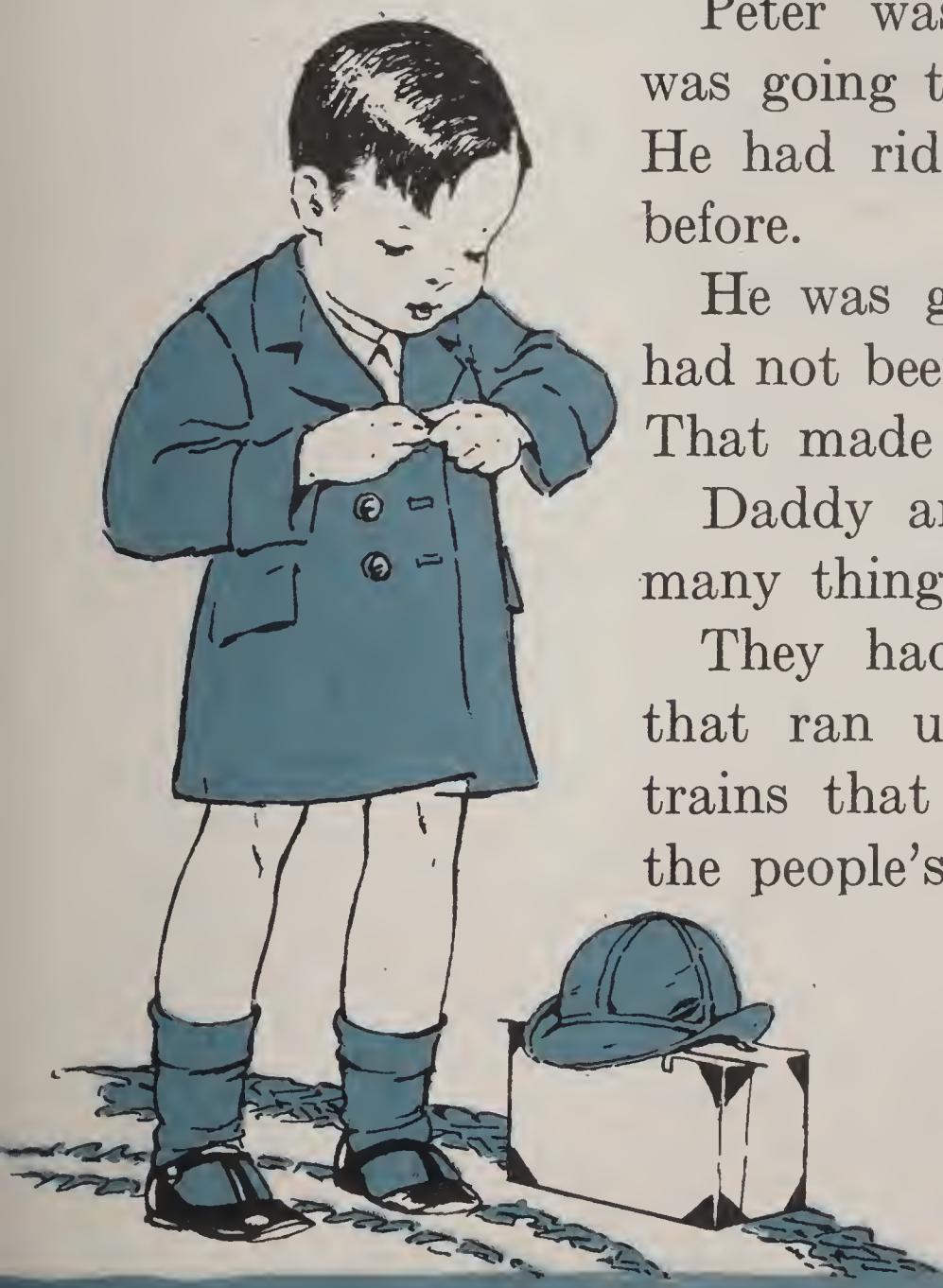
“Ding-dong, ding-dong!” answered Peter. “All aboard for the station!”

Peter was very much excited. He was going to have a ride on the train. He had ridden on a train only once before.

He was going to the city, too. He had not been there since he was a baby. That made him even more excited.

Daddy and Mummy had told him many things about the city.

They had talked about the trains that ran under the ground, and the trains that ran on a bridge high over the people’s heads.



They had said that in the city there were tall houses with hundreds of windows.

There were great stores, too. In them you could buy everything — things to eat, and things to wear, and things to play with.

Peter was so excited that he wanted to run down the street.

At last they came to the station.

There were people waiting.

There was the baggage man with his truck full of boxes and trunks to go on the train.

There were the long shining rails.

But there was no train.

Peter hopped up and down and wished it would come.

Too-too! Too-too!

“It’s coming, Mummy, it’s coming!” cried Peter.

In a moment he could see the engine with its black smoke, coming down the track. Slower and slower it came, dragging the long cars behind it.

At last it stopped at the other end of the station.

The conductor came down the steps of the last car, and Peter and his mother climbed on.

"Too-too! Too-too!" said Mummy. "All aboard for the city!"

"Ding-dong! Ding-dong!" cried Peter. "All aboard for the city!"

He scrambled into a seat and pressed his face against the window.

"Ding-dong! Ding-dong!" went the great bell on the engine.

The train began to move.

Peter and Mummy were on their way.



11. AWAY UP AND AWAY DOWN

The train moved slowly — slowly — slowly —
The people stood up and walked toward the door.
The brakeman put his head in and shouted something.

Peter pressed his face against the window again.
The train stopped.

Outside the people began going by very fast.

There were men with red caps, and men riding on trucks.

There was another train full of people just across the walk.

Peter knew that this must be the station in the city. It was much bigger than the one at home.

“Come, Peter,” said Mother. “We will go right to Aunt Laura’s house.”

They went out into the crowd.

At home Peter walked by himself, but here he was glad to take hold of Mother’s hand.

They went into a big room with many more people, and then up some long stairs.

Peter tried to see everything. He looked from side to side as fast as he could.

Once he fell up the stairs because he was trying to see something behind him. After that he gave up looking, and followed Mummy through a gate that turned round and round.

Then they went into a train that did not seem to have any engine. The door shut behind them, and the train began to move.

“ Doesn’t this train say ding-dong? ” asked Peter.

“ No, ” said Mother. “ This is a different kind of train. Look out and you will see what kind it is.”



Peter looked out. The train came out into the sunlight.

"Mummy!" he cried. "I can see right over the roof of a house!"

"Keep on looking," said Mummy.

Peter kept on looking.

The train went on running up in the air.

Then they began to go down, down, down.

Suddenly Peter could see only a dark wall. He



looked through the windows on the other side of the train. He could see only another dark wall. On the walls were high-up lights that winked at him.

"We are in under the ground!" he cried. "We've been away up and now we're away down. Away up and away down!"

The train stopped. The doors opened all by themselves.

Peter and Mummy got out.

The doors shut, and the train moved away, down the dark tunnel.

"How do we get up on top of the ground again?" asked Peter.

"Up the stairs, step by step," said Mummy.

And so they went, step by step, up the stairs and out into the sunlight.

Peter blinked. It was very bright after the dark subway.

Peter blinked again. He had *never* seen such large houses before.

He was in the city at last.



12. THE TALL HOUSE

Aunt Laura, Mummy and Peter were walking down a street. It had tall houses on each side.

Each house had rows and rows of windows. They looked like great eyes staring. They looked like Peter's eyes trying to see everything.

"How many windows are there in your house, Aunt Laura?" asked Peter.

Aunt Laura stopped. "Why, Peter, I don't *know* how many windows it has. I never counted them. We can soon find out. We are almost home now."

"Which *is* your house?" asked Peter. "They all look alike."

"The one on the next corner," answered Aunt Laura.

Peter ran on ahead until he came to the side of Aunt Laura's house.

He looked up and up. He could hardly see the top. What a lot of eyes it had!

He began to count. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, in the first row."

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, in the second row."

"One, two, three — "

Mummy and Aunt Laura came along.

"Have you found out?" Mummy asked.

"There are ten in the first row," answered Peter, "and ten in the second row. I'm counting the next row. Will you add them for me?"



"You tell us how many rows there are," said Aunt Laura. "Then we can tell the number of the windows without counting them all."

So Peter began to count the rows. That was harder because he had to look so high.

"One, two, three, four, five, six, rows," he counted. "Six rows!"

"Six rows of windows, and each row has ten windows in it," said Mummy. "That makes six times ten windows, or sixty windows, on the side. Have you counted the front?"

Peter ran around to the front

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, in the first row."

"One, two — "

"I think all the rows will be the same, Peter," said Aunt Laura. "Sixty windows on the side, and sixty-six windows on the front. That makes one hundred and twenty-six windows. Some day we will find out how many there are in the back."

Peter sat down on the step to think.

He had had one hundred cents once. That was a dollar in pennies. He remembered what a long tail they made on the rug.

Just think of living in a house with more than one hundred windows!

"Aunt Laura, do you have to wash them all?" he asked.

Aunt Laura laughed. "No, dear, there are only ten windows in my apartment."

Peter felt glad. "Let's go in so I can see," said Peter.

13. PETER GOES HOME

Peter slept three nights in Aunt Laura's house with more than one hundred windows.

He rode up and down in the elevator.

He bought a box of paints in a big store.

He had a dish of ice cream at dinner.

He saw the traffic lights turn yellow and red and green.

He rode again on the away-up and the away-down train.

Then it was time to say good-by. Peter went with Mummy to the big city station and climbed aboard the railroad train.

Now they were almost home.

Peter was going to tell Nanny about the elevated and the subway and all the other things.

He was going to paint a picture of Aunt Laura's tall house.

He was going to play some new games.

He was a little tired now.

"Did you have a good time, Peter?" asked Mother.

"Yes, Mummy," said Peter sleepily.

He sat with his face pressed against the window.

The poles rushed by. The houses and churches and barns rushed by.

There was a song in the wheels, "Going-home-a-



going-home-a-going-home." The wheels sang Peter to sleep.

He did not hear the bell saying, "Ding-dong, ding-dong."

He did not know that the train was slowing down, thumpity-bump, thumpity-bump.

It stopped.

Peter woke up and looked out of the window. He saw his father come across the platform and into the train.

They all got out together and walked home.

They went up the path to the big yellow house.

Boo-woo-woo! Terry came tumbling down from the porch and jumped around Peter. Terry was glad to see them.

Click-click! Nanny opened the door and hugged Peter. Nanny was glad to see them.

Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling! The white kitten came running down the stairs and rubbed against Peter's legs. *She* was glad to see them.

Boom-boom-boom-boom-boom! The tall clock was saying, "Glad you have come home."

Peter was glad, too.

14. FIVE YEARS OLD

When Peter woke up, he could just see the hobby-horse in the corner. He knew it was morning. Was it going to be a cloudy day?

The tall clock was striking, "Time for boys to jump from —" The booming voice stopped.

It was not seven o'clock after all.

Peter wondered why he was awake so early. Then he remembered. It was his birthday!

Perhaps that was what the clock had meant to say, "Peter is five years old to-day."

He could not sleep any more.

After a while he crept out of bed and ran softly to the window. The sky was pink. It looked like the frosting on a birthday cake.

There would be five candles on his cake this year. Peter found his bathrobe and slippers. He closed the window and sat down again.

He saw a man go by with his lunch box on the way to work.

He saw Terry come out of his house and stretch and run off down the road.

He heard the rooster crowing in Jimmy's yard.

He could see the top of the sun. It looked like a great red ball behind the hill.

“Good-morning, sun,” said Peter. “I am five years old to-day!”

The sun did not answer. Peter knew it could not.

Then a voice said, “Good-morning, son! So you are five years old to-day!”

That was Daddy at the door. Peter knew Daddy was speaking to him and not to the great red sun behind the hill.

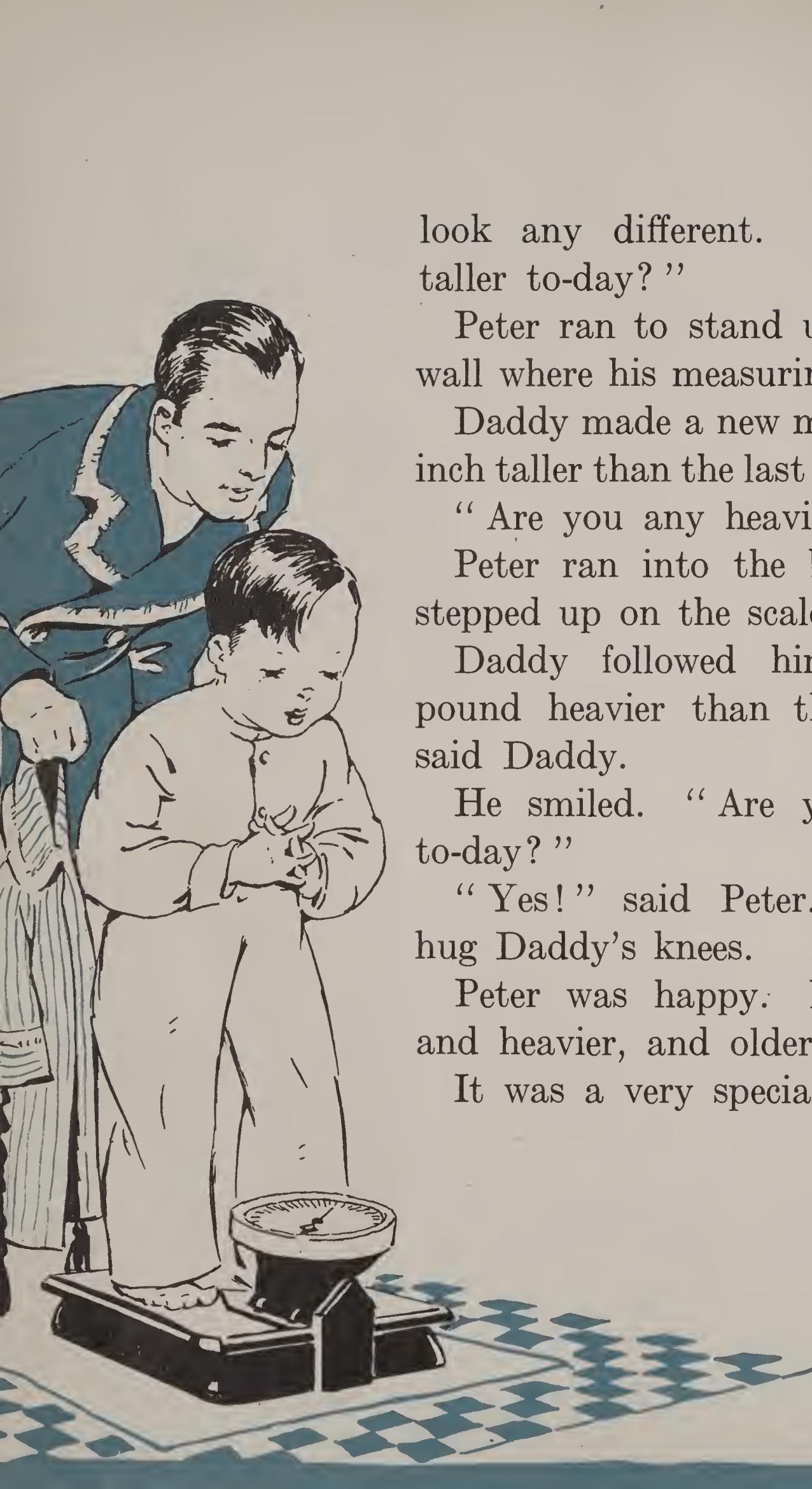
Daddy picked him up and held him high in the air. Then he set him down.

“Do you look any different today?” asked Daddy.

Peter turned all the way around so that Daddy could see him better.

“No,” said Daddy. “You don’t





look any different. Are you any taller to-day?"

Peter ran to stand up against the wall where his measuring marks were.

Daddy made a new mark. "A half inch taller than the last time," he said.

"Are you any heavier to-day?"

Peter ran into the bathroom and stepped up on the scales.

Daddy followed him. "A half pound heavier than the last time," said Daddy.

He smiled. "Are you any *older* to-day?"

"Yes!" said Peter. He ran to hug Daddy's knees.

Peter was happy. He was taller, and heavier, and older.

It was a very special day!

15. THE BIRTHDAY CAKE

Peter drank his orange juice.

He wished that birthday cakes came at breakfast.

Then he had a thought. "This is ice cream," said Peter.

It was really oatmeal, but Peter was playing make-believe.

Soon the oatmeal was all gone.

"This is birthday cake with yellow and white frosting," said Peter.

It was really a dropped egg on toast, but Peter was still playing make-believe.



Soon the egg and toast were all gone.

“This is lemonade,” said Peter.

It was really milk, but Peter was pretending.

Soon the milk was all gone.

“May I please be excused?” asked Peter.

“Yes, Peter,” said Mother. “Would you like to give Dicky his bath and breakfast all by yourself, now that you are five years old?”

“Oh, may I?” asked Peter.

He spread a big paper on the table by the window, and brought all the things he needed. He had often helped Mother do it, so he knew just how to begin.

He brought Dicky’s little white bathtub full of water.

Then Dicky took a big bath. He splashed water all over the table.



He filled Dicky's little dish with seed.
He put a clean paper on the bottom of the cage.
He gave Dicky some sand, and some fresh water to drink.
“I can take care of you all myself, now that I am five years old,” said Peter to Dicky.

Dicky hopped up onto his perch and began to eat his fresh seed.

Peter went out to the kitchen. Bessie was mixing something in a big bowl. Peter wondered if it were birthday cake.

“The white kitten is hungry,” said Bessie. “Would you like to give her some breakfast?”

Peter poured some milk into a saucer and gave it to the white kitten. Her bell said very softly, “Ting—a—ling—a—ling—a—ling,” while she drank the milk.



"I shall give you your breakfast every morning, now that I'm five years old," Peter said to the white kitten.

The white kitten kept right on drinking.

Peter went out into the yard.

Hoppy stood up in his little house and pressed his nose against the wire.

Peter looked into the little house. Hoppy's food was all gone.

Peter ran to get a carrot. He pushed it through



the wire. Hoppy began to gnaw the carrot.

"I guess I won't forget to feed you any more, now that I'm five years old," said Peter to Hoppy.

Hoppy kept right on eating. His nose went wiggle-wiggle.

Peter sat down on the back steps. He smelled a very nice smell. He thought it might be birthday cake.

Terry came and put his nose against Peter's knee.



He wanted to play.

Peter and Terry played together for a long time. Then Terry lay down to take a nap.

Peter made birthday cakes in the sand.

Each one had five candles.

Nanny opened the nursery window. "Peter," said Nanny, "it's time to get ready for dinner."

Peter hurried. He was ready on time.

Dinner was very good. Peter ate everything that was on his plate.

Bessie took away the dishes. When she came back, she set something in front of Peter.

It was pink, just like the pink sky in the morning. It had five candles.

"Happy birthday, Peter," said Mother and Daddy and Nanny all together.

"Thank you," said Peter in a loud voice.

He did not have to play make-believe any more. *This birthday cake was real.*



16. A RAINY DAY

It was raining hard. The raindrops ran down the windowpane, and down the windowpane, until Peter was tired of watching them.

Mummy sat by the table, sewing. Her needle went in and out, in and out.

"Peter," said Mummy, "I am thinking of something round and red. Guess what it is."

Peter thought hard. "My ball?" said Peter.

Mummy clapped her hands. "You tell me one next," she said.



"I am thinking of something shiny and sharp," said Peter. "Now you guess."

"Is it my needle?" asked Mummy.

"Yes," said Peter.

"I am thinking of something that runs on four feet," said Mummy. "What do you think it is?"

"The little white kitten," guessed Peter. "I am thinking of something that runs on four wheels."

"Daddy's car," said Mummy. "I am thinking of something that has four legs but cannot run."

"Your chair," guessed Peter.

"No," said Mummy.

"The table," guessed Peter again.

"Right," said Mummy.

Peter stopped to think. "I know something that has two legs but cannot walk."

"Oh," cried Mummy, "your baby sister!"

The tall clock in the hall began to boom-boom-boom.

"I know something that smells good, and looks good, and tastes good," said Mummy.

"Dinner!" shouted Peter. And he ran to "wash his hands, wash his face, comb his hair, and take his place."

17. SPRINGTIME IN MOTHER'S GARDEN

It was springtime.

Peter liked to sit on the steps in the warm sunshine and look at Mother's garden.

He heard the trees whispering. Perhaps they were talking about their fat new buds.

He saw the tulips bending toward each other. Perhaps they liked each other's pretty colors.

He heard the birds twittering. Maybe they were talking about the nests they were going to build.

"They are all doing something for spring," thought Peter. "What can *I* do for spring?"



After a little while he said to himself, "I know, I will write a little song."

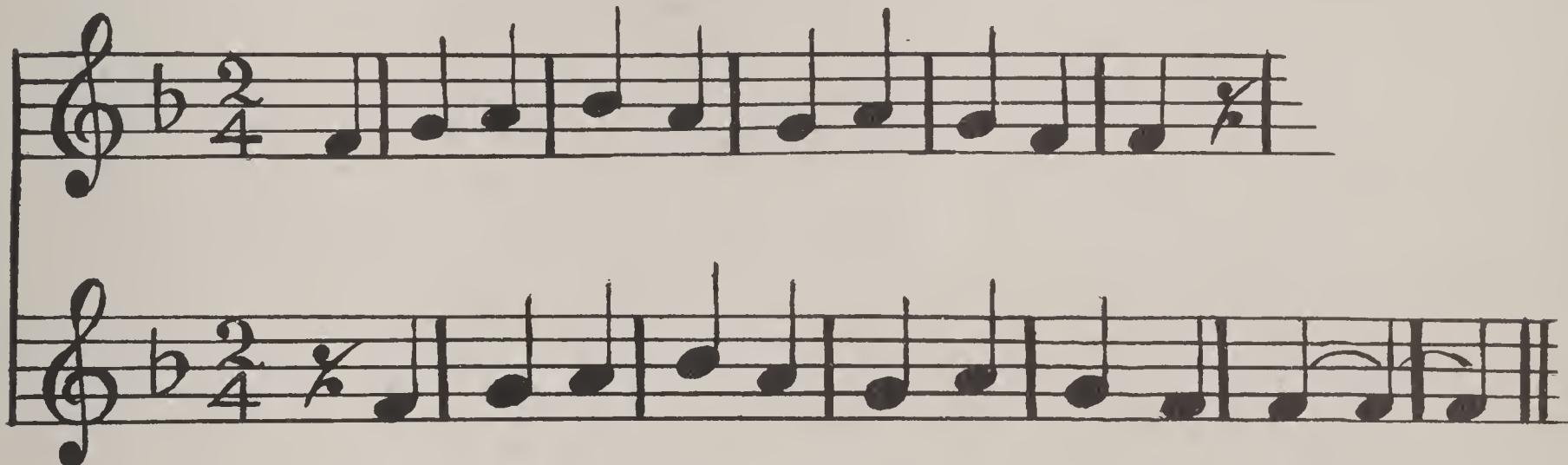
So Peter sat on the steps in the warm sunshine, and made up a song. It was a little hard to get the tune and the words just right. Mother came out and sat down beside him.

"I'm writing a little song for the spring," said Peter. "It doesn't go just right. Will you help me, Mummy?"

"Sing it to me, Peter," said Mummy, "and I will try to help." Peter sang his little song.

"That is nice, Peter," said Mummy. "All you need to do is to end it this way." Mummy sang the little song.

Then she and Peter sang it together. It went like this:



So they sat on the steps in the warm sunshine.

The trees in the garden whispered together. The tulips bent their heads. The birds twittered. *Peter sang his little song!*

And everything in Mother's garden was glad.

18. THE FAMILY PICTURE

The sun shone on the big yellow house where Peter lived.

All of Peter's family had come out to sit in the sunshine. They were going to have their picture taken.

The man who was going to take the picture looked at Peter's family.

He saw Peter's tall Daddy, with his dark hair, and Peter's tall Mummy, with her light hair, and Peter's baby sister, with almost no hair at all.

He saw Nanny, who took care of Peter and of Baby.

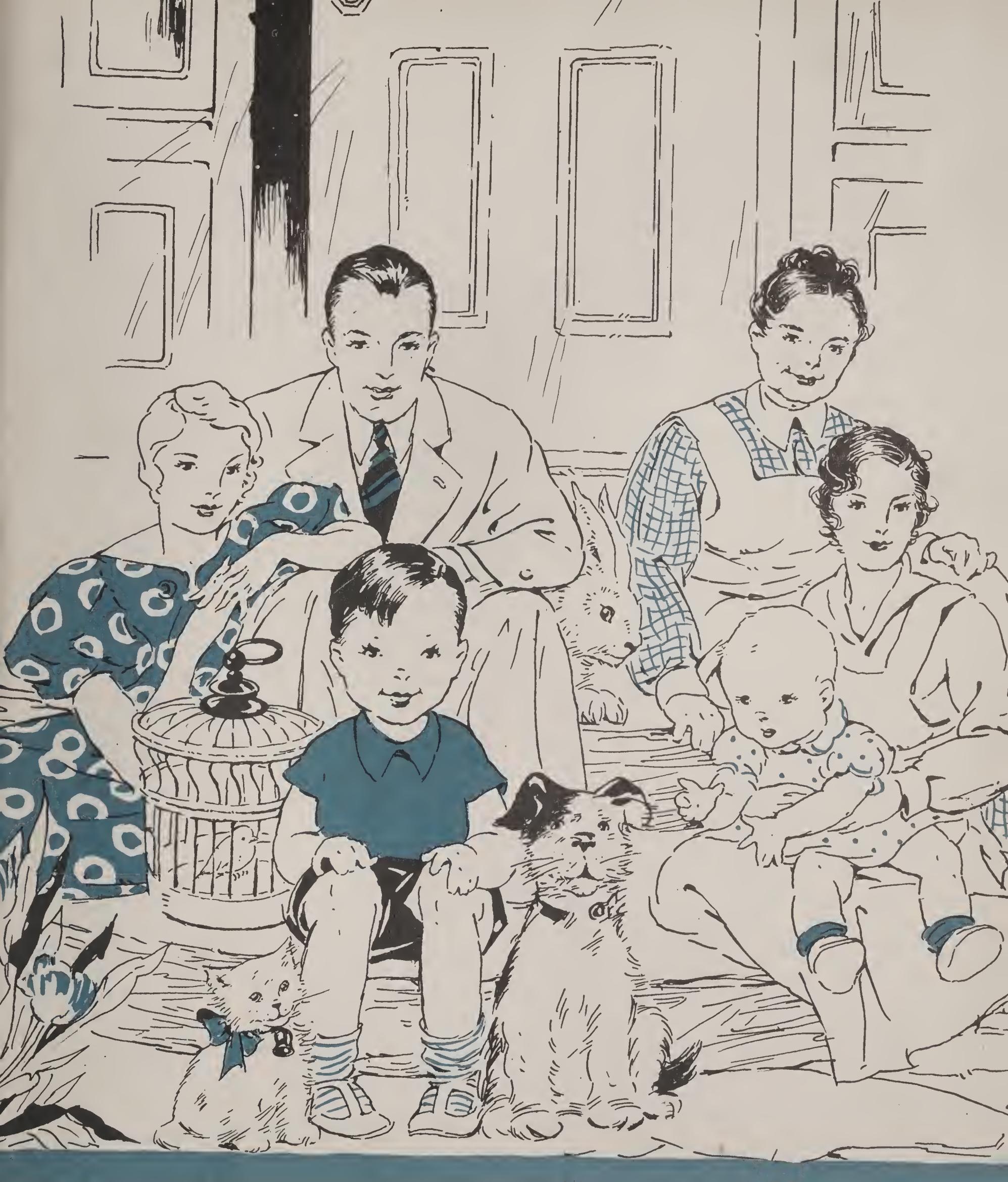
He saw Bessie, who cooked their breakfast and dinner and supper.

He saw the little yellow bird named Dicky, and the black-and-white dog named Terry, and the brown bunny named Hoppy.

He saw the little white kitten with the bell on a ribbon around her neck.

He told them all where to sit.

Then he looked into his camera and did something with his hands.



The camera made a soft clicking sound.

“All done,” said the man.

Peter thought how nice it would be to have a picture of all his family.

He turned around to look at them all. Peter looked at Daddy and Mummy and Baby and Nanny and Bessie, and at Dicky and Terry and Hoppy and the white kitten.

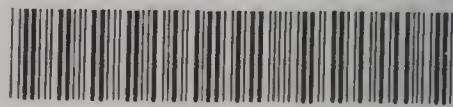
“You are my family,” said Peter. “I love you all.”







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